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NSC BRIEFING

17 June 1954

INDOCHINA

I. Military picture delta little changed,
but Viet Minh readiness believed complete.

A. National Intelligence Estimate,
for 30 days ending 15 July,
concludes Viet Minh will increase
delta operations, possibly com-
mitting battle corps, to push
back French, demoralize Viet-
namese and cut LOC Hanoi-Haiphong.

B. French will be able hold key
strong points, keep LOC open
part-time.

C. In face major attack, however,
French might evacuate Hanoi, fall
back to Haiphong, which could
almost certainly hold.

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D. Vietnamese political situation
will probably continue deteriorate.

III. French apprehensive of attack but claim no conclusive evidence enemy intent. Says enemy stockpiles rear areas sufficient for initial stages attack.

A. Nearness China border would permit resupply sustain large-scale offensive.



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- B. French expect early increase
Chinese aid (now close 3,000
tons per month).

iv. Vietnamese morale, important determinant
enemy course of action, very low.

- A.  desertions

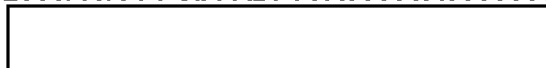
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Vietnamese army units, militia
delta highest yet.

- 1. Fear for safety of families
in areas where Viet Minh
consolidating control a
major cause desertions.

- B. Prospects early Viet Minh military
or diplomatic victory lessening
weak support Vietnamese for
government, army.

- C. Only three percent delta
villages loyal to French.



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D. Other instances sagging morale:
mutiny Vietnamese army mobile
group stationed in Central
Vietnam; anti-conscription
rioting south Saigon; rioting
at Vietnamese naval academy.

V. Meanwhile, Governor Tri says Ely
evasive on French plans for delta.

A. Tri fears evacuation Hanoi,
possible plans abandon people
southern delta.

B. Ely's evasiveness typical uneasy
French-Vietnamese relationship.